

respected the Bulgarians more than she did the Servians. I was amused to find that the princess knew all about my family, and put me many questions about my elder daughter, whom she laughingly referred to as "the Princess Alice."

The Italian queen herself was obviously a fine and noble woman, and she was the real peasant queen, the Saga queen, the queen of the folk stories and fairy-tales—the kind of queen whom the hero meets when he starts out with his wallet and staff and travels "far and far and farther than far," and finally comes to a palace up to which he strolls, and sees the king sitting in front of the door looking at the sheep or the chickens. To be king or queen in a country like Italy at the present day means unending strain and worry, and both the king and the queen were faithfully and conscientiously and wisely, and with great self-devotion and self-abnegation, doing everything they could to meet the difficulties of an uncommonly difficult situation. They are loving and faithful to each other—I know you share my bourgeois prejudices against domestic immorality, which are stronger directly in proportion as the social position of the offenders is higher—and it was good to see their relations, together and with their children. The queen spoke with horror of war and violence, and mentioned that she did not think she could ever strike a blow herself, unless in defense of her children, or if her husband was attacked by an assassin; and as she

spoke her  
eyes smoldered and she straightened her tall  
form. She  
loves to talk of her life at home in Montenegro,  
and one  
anecdote she told me gave me an insight into  
the reason why  
the Montenegrins show a more than medieval  
devotion to  
their sovereign. She said that when she was  
a child a  
famine came to the people, who were finally  
reduced to eat  
only rice; and her father, then reigning  
prince and pres-  
ent king, summoned his family together, and  
told them  
that if their mother had much to do and needed  
meat and  
would continue to eat it, but that he and the  
children would  
from that time on eat only rice, until the  
people too had